United Nations S/PV.4532

Security Council

Fifty-seventh year

Provisional

4532nd meeting
Tuesday, 14 May 2002, 10.45 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Mahbubani	(Singapore)
Members:	Bulgaria	Mr. Tafrov
	Cameroon	Mr. Chungong Ayafor
	China	Mr. Wang Yingfan
	Colombia	Mr. Valdivieso
	France	Mr. Levitte
	Guinea	Mr. Fall
	Ireland	Mr. Corr
	Mauritius	Mr. Koonjul
	Mexico	Mr. Aguilar Zinser
	Norway	Mr. Strømmen
	Russian Federation	Mr. Granovsky
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Wehbe
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Mr. Williamson

Agenda

The situation in the Great Lakes region

Report of the Security Council mission to the Great Lakes region, 27 April-7 May 2002 (S/2002/537).

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

02-38127 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Great Lakes region

Report of the Security Council mission to the Great Lakes region, 27 April-7 May 2002 (S/2002/537)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, South Africa and Spain, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Nteturuye (Burundi), Mr. Atoki (Democratic Republic of the Congo), Mr. Gasana (Rwanda), Mr.Kumalo (South Africa) and Mr. Arias (Spain) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council table.

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2002/537, containing the report of the Security Council mission to the Great Lakes region, from 27 April to 7 May 2002. Members also have before them photocopies of the addendum to the report, which will be issued as a document of the Security Council.

I call on Mr. Jean-David Levitte, Head of the Security Council mission to the Great Lakes region.

Mr. Levitte (France)(spoke in French): The members of the Council have before them the report of the third Security Council mission to the Great Lakes region. I believe that we may be able to use this meeting to reflect on the significance of our mission.

In 10 days we met with 8 heads of State, the leaders of several rebel movements - Congolese and Burundian — many leaders of political parties and representatives of civil society. We conducted this new mission at the request of the parties themselves, in a spirit of real partnership between the Security Council and the parties to two African Agreements — the Lusaka Agreement and the Arusha Agreement — to achieve peace in the Great Lakes region and security for all the countries of the region, and primarily for the future of the peoples concerned — the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the people of Burundi.

Let us recall that between 2 and 3 million people in the Democratic Republic of the Congo itself have fallen victim, directly or indirectly, to the war in the Great Lakes region, a conflict that has lasted for more than three years. There have also been mass violations of human rights, a disastrous humanitarian situation and the plundering of resources. What struck us in hearing the representatives of civil society everywhere was their unanimous message regarding the withdrawal of all foreign troops, the political and administrative unity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and of Burundi and the need for a halt to the plundering of natural resources, which must belong to the people of the countries concerned.

This was our third mission in two years. It was an opportunity to examine the ground covered in that period to unravel the complicated aspects of this crisis. The ceasefire in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is holding along the disengagement line, even though there is fighting in the most eastern part of the country, where there are many civilian victims.

Secondly, the disengagement line is being fully respected, even though there are still certain positions to be corrected here and there. It is urgent that the parties implement the commitments that they themselves have made. Thirdly, the withdrawal of foreign armed forces has been completed by Namibia. Uganda and Angola are fully engaged in this process. Zimbabwe has begun, and no withdrawal by Rwanda has been confirmed by the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC).

Fourthly, the inter-Congolese dialogue has made remarkable progress in Sun City, and we should pay tribute to the facilitator, Sir Ketumile Masire, to President Thabo Mbeki and, above all, to the Congolese participants themselves, who unanimously adopted 37 texts, which constitute an excellent base for a transition of two or three years towards democratic elections.

The Government and the Mouvement pour la libération du Congo (MLC) concluded an agreement on the political formula for this transition period. It was signed by 80 per cent of the participants at Sun City, but it has not been accepted by the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie-Goma (RCD-Goma), which has created an alliance with a certain number of political parties.

So, you can see that there is undeniable progress. However, at the same time, there is still a long way to go. Therefore, the objective of our mission was to make some progress in the main areas of the peace process.

Our first recommendation following this mission is the absolute need strictly to respect the ceasefire. Today, nothing can justify a violation of the ceasefire. Those who might take the initiative of restarting the fighting, must know that they would be condemned in the severest terms by a unanimous Security Council.

Secondly, with respect to the inter-Congolese dialogue, the Security Council wants an inclusive agreement that leaves no one on the sidelines. We believe that the negotiations that we got going again among the three signatories of the Lusaka Agreement during the meeting in Luanda must be followed by further meetings, which must be held in a spirit of openness and without preconditions.

It seems to us that that there really remains very little to discuss in order to reach an agreement. It is a question of finding the formula that will make it possible during two or three years to govern the Democratic Republic of the Congo and guide it towards democratic elections. However, the little that remains is still quite sensitive because it involves the distribution of posts. That is why we recommend that the dialogue be held in a spirit of discretion, which will make it possible to bring the positions closer together. I repeat, it must be done without preconditions and in a spirit of openness. It is possible, and the parties must make progress in this direction. The Security Council will have to encourage anything that can help the parties to come together. We will discuss this again in our consultations at the end of the week.

Failing this, there is a risk that we would have to envisage a partition for an undetermined period. One thinks of Cyprus. I must say that there is a great difference between Cyprus and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In Cyprus, the populations of the two sides of the island do not wish to live together. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, quite to the contrary, there is a unanimous will on the part of all the Congolese to be united, which struck all members of the Security Council. Nonetheless, there is a risk of a division of the country into two antagonistic areas. This is of concern to us because we are committed to the search for peace and security for the Congo and its region.

My third message relates to the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of the combatants, the former Forces armées rwandaises (ex-FAR) and the Rwandan Interahamwe. We must be careful to fully take into consideration the security concerns of Rwanda. We noted with satisfaction the solemn commitment made before the Security Council by President Kabila, a commitment under which his Government is not now helping and will not help the ex-FAR and Interahamwe groups. The wish was expressed that MONUC should verify that commitment.

Likewise, President Kabila expressed to us his determination to transfer to the Tribunal in Arusha those guilty of genocide, appearing on the list of the Tribunal and possibly residing on Congolese soil. I will mention to members of the Council that I received a telephone call from Adama Dieng, the Registrar of the Tribunal, who received a letter from the Congolese Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. She Okitundu, inviting him to return to Kinshasa in order to establish cooperation on the ground with a view to transferring those guilty of genocide that might be on Congolese soil.

During our stay in Kinshasa, we destroyed 1000 weapons by fire. We want to see the process of the voluntary disarmament of 1,800 Rwandan combatants that began in Kamina be followed by their voluntary repatriation as soon as possible.

Finally, MONUC, represented here by Mr. Ngongi, the Special Representative of the Secretary-

General, is determined to undertake phase III of its work with the deployment towards the east, which will make it possible to come much closer to the ex-FAR and Interahamwe groups in order to disarm them on a voluntary basis and to repatriate them to Rwanda.

The fourth aspect of the situation is the withdrawal of foreign forces from Congolese soil. That withdrawal must be fully completed with reciprocal movements as provided for in the Lusaka Agreement. In order to take into account the security concerns of three countries neighbouring the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Uganda, Burundi and Rwanda, the Council put forward an idea that, it seems to us, is likely to render service to the parties themselves: the idea of a "curtain" of troops. I will reiterate the terms of that idea as we presented them to our interlocutors. In the framework of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement and as the last phase of the withdrawal of foreign troops from the countries concerned, it would involve the presence of troops from the neighbouring country on Congolese soil, for a limited time period and over a limited space, along the borders: for example, a curtain of Rwandan troops on Congolese soil, along the border with Rwanda. Those troops would, for a limited period and over a limited area, be there to work with Congolese troops and — why not, if the parties so request? — with the contribution of MONUC observers and possibly African contingents. This would be the last stage before complete withdrawal. This would be done to create a spirit of cooperation and trust between neighbouring countries that are destined to live side by side in a spirit of cooperation that would be gradually built between them in order to ensure the security of all.

That proposal was overall positively received by the leaders of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, first of all, but also by the three heads of State of the countries concerned: President Museveni, President Buyoya and President Kagame. Once again, let me say that this is just an idea and that it is now up to the parties themselves to work on it and to see whether they want to follow up on it.

To conclude my comments on what Ambassador Greenstock termed the triangle of these three situations, let me say that our concern is to see to it that the three sides of the triangle — the Government in Kinshasa, the disarmament of the ex-FAR and Interahamwe groups, and the withdrawal of the troops — all are moving towards a global solution.

We can see that progress has been made, and we must continue to work in that direction. That is the thrust of our proposals.

These three aspects are interrelated. Let me give an example: Rwanda tells us that its concern is security — that security is its only concern. If it finds a solution, we will withdraw all of our troops. Thus far, Rwanda has adopted a strategy of advancing 600 kilometres within the Congo in order to resolve the problem on its own. But Rwanda has acknowledged that this strategy is not working, since it is asking us to implement another strategy — that of the disarmament of ex-FAR and Interahamwe groups. Therefore we would express to Rwanda our conviction that, if a government of national unity can be established in Kinshasa, that will help Rwanda to resolve its problem, because, as I have said, President Kabila has expressed his determination to prevent the provision of any assistance to the ex-FAR and the Interahamwe.

Mr. Jean-Pierre Bemba has expressed to us his determination to resolve this problem once and for all, and it goes without saying that the leaders of the RCD-Goma have the same intention. Therefore the establishment of a transitional government of national unity in Kinshasa is, objectively speaking, a means of helping Rwanda to deal with its security problem.

Secondly, MONUC will be able to act effectively if it has in Kinshasa a government that represents the unity of the Congo and that is determined to help MONUC observers and contingents accomplish their task of disarming the ex-FAR. Thus we can see that there certainly is a link between the establishment of a government of national unity in Kinshasa, the effective disarmament of the ex-FAR and Interahamwe groups, and the necessary withdrawal of all foreign troops from the Congo.

We want to use that triangle to create the dynamics of peace. I believe that this is the profound meaning of our action, and that this is the very core of what the Security Council wants to accomplish in the service of peace in the Great Lakes region.

I might add that one thorny issue remains as far as the Council is concerned: the question of Kisangani. We went there, and I think that I can accurately convey the aspirations of civil society in Kisangani. The people of Kisangani want the withdrawal of all troops that are present in the city and in its environs. They want the complete demilitarization of the city, and they

want the reopening of the river to commercial traffic, as announced, to become a reality. The agreement was signed by the Kinshasa Government, the MLC and the RCD–Goma. None of the parties must be able to prevent the reopening of the river to commercial traffic. MONUC must be able to assist in the resumption of trade, as the lives of millions of Congolese are at stake. The commitments undertaken must be implemented: the speedy and complete demilitarization of Kisangani and the reopening of the river to commercial traffic.

The relaunching of the economy has begun. During our stay, the Director-General of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) was in Kinshasa, and I want to welcome the presence in this Chamber of representatives of the World Bank and of the IMF. It is a good thing for us to be able to listen to each other and understand each other, so that the efforts made on one side can complement the efforts made on the other. The relaunching of the economies must show the peoples of the region that progress towards peace will bring with it peace dividends.

We gave all the heads of State of the region a non-paper expressing the views of the Council on an idea that is not new — that of holding an international conference in the Great Lakes region — in order to show them that we envisaging prospects of cooperation among neighbouring countries whose future is to work together for peace, for mutual security, and for integrated economic development.

In order to follow up on all of this, we suggest a follow-up mechanism, the terms of which remain to be specified. Since the Council has the useful habit of visiting the region once a year, and since our partners from the Political Committee in Lusaka also come here to see us once a year, in the fall, then it seems to us that it is necessary that on a day-by-day basis there also be close follow-up. That is why the recommendation contained in our report is being made.

These are my comments on the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

On the subject of Burundi, I think that I can be quite brief. We met with all of the authorities of the country, and we noted first of all that considerable progress has been made since our visit last year. Indeed, the transition has begun; it is a reality now. We met with all of those involved.

Yet the peace process in Burundi also remains fragile. There are three messages: first, the cessation of hostilities. The two armed groups with which we met in Pretoria — the Forces pour la défense de la démocratie (FDD) and Forces nationales pour la Liberation (FNL) — must hear our message. Nothing can justify the continuation of hostilities. The fighting must come to an end. There is an urgent need for those movements to go to the negotiating table.

A regional summit is being envisaged in a few weeks. Our Council should maintain a intensive dialogue with the leaders of Burundi and of the region in order to achieve that necessary cessation of hostilities, to which we all aspire.

Secondly, the implementation of reforms during this transition period is indispensable - with or without a ceasefire — within the limits of the military situation. Specific reforms are provided for under the Arusha Agreement. The Security Council is determined to see that the authorities of the transition period, each one in its sphere of competence — be it the presidency, the Government or the two Assemblies – accomplish all of the reforms that have been stipulated, insofar as possible.

Lastly, and I say this in the presence of the representatives of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, all of our Burundian interlocutors — the leaders, the political parties and civil society — have insisted strongly and with unity on the need for urgent economic assistance. They all want the pledges made at the Paris and Geneva conferences to be fulfilled without delay. The Security Council supports these requests, because it is aware of the link between peace dividends and the success of the peace process.

If the population in Burundi sees that the transition that has been established, and that may be exemplary, does not lead to a cease-fire, or to reform, or to economic progress, then we have reason to fear the serious consequences of disillusion, the first elements of which are already appearing.

A last conclusion and recommendation on Burundi concerns the Arusha Agreement follow-up committee, which has been repatriated from Arusha to Bujumbura. The paradox of the present situation is that last year there was a representative of the Secretary-General, Jean Arnaud, permanently residing in Bujumbura. Today, the committee has been repatriated to Bujumbura, but there is no representative living in

Bujumbura. We know the specific reasons explaining the current situation, but we recommend that the Secretary-General find a solution in accordance with the modalities that he decides to set forth.

In conclusion, there has been slow but undeniable progress since the Council committed itself to the Great Lakes region. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo as in Burundi progress towards peace is well under way, but the progress is still fragile. The peace process in the two countries has not yet become irreversible. The commitment of the international community therefore must remain constant and strong. The role of MONUC is in all areas positive. I want to avail myself of this meeting to pay tribute to MONUC, which, in difficult circumstances, is accomplishing remarkable work. Our own commitment in the Security Council must remain constant in a partnership with all the countries of the region, be they the signatories of the Lusaka Agreement or the countries of the regional initiative on Burundi.

I would like to thank all Council members, because I believe that what we have accomplished in those 10 days was real teamwork. I would like to express my gratitude to you for this.

The President: On behalf of the Council I should like to express gratitude and appreciation to all of the members of the Security Council mission, which was very ably led by Ambassador Levitte, for the manner in which they discharged their important responsibility on the Council's behalf. My only personal regret is that I was not able to join the mission, because I was detained here by my duties as President of the Security Council.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of Spain. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Arias (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Cyprus, Malta, Turkey, Iceland and Liechtenstein align themselves with the statement by the European Union.

The European Union welcomes the third Security Council mission to the Great Lakes region, which took place between 27 April and 7 May, as a proof of the Council's determination to maintain a long-term engagement in favour of peace in the Great Lakes region. We wish to pay tribute to the leadership shown by Ambassador Jean-David Levitte as head of that mission.

The European Union welcomes the results of the meetings of the inter-Congolese dialogue, during which the various delegations discussed highly sensitive issues in a calm and constructive climate. We note that the 37 reports approved establish beyond doubt the high level of commitment invested in the search for national reconciliation and peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The European Union also wishes to express its thanks for the work of the dialogue facilitator's team and for the efforts of the Government of South Africa.

The European Union takes note of the signed agreement between the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Mouvement pour la libération du Congo (MLC), which has been endorsed by many political opposition parties and representatives of sectors of civil society. The political agreement reached at the dialogue between the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the MLC, to which a majority of the participants were also parties, could facilitate the political transition and help consolidate the regional peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo based on the Lusaka Agreement and the resolutions of the Security Council. The European Union welcomes the desire expressed by the signatories to extend the agreement to all Congolese parties and invites them to pursue discussions in a spirit of openness in order to reach a comprehensive and all-inclusive agreement on the transitional institutions.

We support the Council's call to the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie (RCD) and the MLC that they continue negotiations on a comprehensive and integral agreement. We ask all the Congolese parties to act responsibly, show a willingness to compromise and abide by the framework established by the Lusaka Agreements and corresponding resolutions of the United Nations.

The European Union calls on all countries in the region to use their influence on all the Congolese parties so that they respect and support the desire for peace, democracy and reconciliation expressed at Sun City.

The European Union remains very concerned by the continuing clashes in the north and east of the country and by the increasing instability in Kasai. It urges all the parties to the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement to refrain from all military operations or acts of provocation that could threaten the political impetus that has emerged from Sun City.

Regarding the withdrawal of foreign forces, the European Union supports the proposal presented by the Security Council mission for the establishment of a "curtain" of troops along the eastern borders of the Democratic Republic of the Congo as an interim measure aimed at ensuring border security in the final stages of troop withdrawal.

We recall that the parties will have to work together to create the climate of confidence and security necessary to facilitate the process of disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration (DDRRR), and we call on them to work closely among themselves and with the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) in this regard. The DDRRR unit is playing a crucial role in phase III of MONUC deployment, and it has to be given the means to fulfil its obligations. The European Union supports the recommendation of the Secretary-General in his report S/2002/169 that the military strength of MONUC be increased, and we encourage the Security Council in this regard to give due consideration to this recommendation when it discusses the renewal of the mandate of MONUC.

We hope that the situation of the combatants at Kamina will be resolved soon, and that this will constitute a good start for the DDRRR operations. The European Union is ready to support any efforts in this regard, and the European Commission is preparing a first contribution of 20 million euros to the World Bank trust fund.

The European Union also supports the Security Council's strong stance on the immediate and unconditional demilitarization of Kisangani.

We remain deeply concerned about the serious violations of human rights and the appalling humanitarian situation affecting a large part of the population in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We support the recommendation of the mission that the Security Council pay particular attention to MONUC's mandate in the field of human rights and humanitarian assistance to those who need it most, taking into account the needs of women and girls. It is to be hoped that the progressive deployment of humanitarian and human rights personnel in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo will lead to improvements in this area.

The European Union considers that the establishment of a follow-up mechanism to the peace process, as suggested by the mission, would be important in helping ensure coordination and coherence in the action taken by the international community.

With regard to the situation in Burundi, the European Union is extremely concerned by the continuing violence and worsening humanitarian situation, particularly in the rural area of Bujumbura. Once again, it appeals to all the warring factions to respect the civilian population in the name of international humanitarian law and calls on all parties to respect human rights.

The Union condemns the logic of war that the armed groups still seem to be following. The Union calls for the immediate cessation of hostilities and appeals to the various factions of the armed groups to continue with the talks currently in progress with the firm intention of bringing them to a successful conclusion. At the same time, the Union calls on the Burundian Government to put forward a transparent and coherent policy for reintegrating armed groups into the Burundian army. It encourages the ongoing efforts to negotiate a definitive and permanent ceasefire — efforts that are continuing under Gabonese and South African facilitation, with the support of Tanzania. The Union is ready to support this process.

The European Union notes the beginning of the operation for the voluntary repatriation of Burundian refugees in Tanzania, in accordance with the tripartite agreement between the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Burundian and Tanzanian Governments. It recalls that, in accordance with the provisions of the Arusha Agreement, the return of refugees must be voluntary and must take place in dignity with guaranteed security, taking into account the particular vulnerability of women and children. The Union urges the armed groups to do everything possible to guarantee the security of refugees returning to Burundi. Reception mechanisms must be put in place before their return.

The Union also encourages the Government and all the transitional institutions to consolidate the reform process that has already begun by implementing the transition programme in accordance with the planned timetable, so that a Burundian society can be constructed that is in harmony with the Agreement and is inclusive of all Burundians.

In conclusion, we concur with the Security Council mission about the need for the transitional Government to implement the reforms called for in the Arusha Agreement. For its part, the Union expresses its willingness to continue to support the peace process in Burundi.

The President: I noticed earlier that there was some puzzlement among observers when I called on a non-member of the Council to speak first. I should have explained that in our prior consultations we agreed that, in proceedings this morning, Ambassador Levitte would first present his report, after which we would invite non-members of the Council to speak and then throw open the floor to Council members to respond or make additional comments.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Ileka (Democratic Republic of the Congo) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I have the pleasant duty of expressing my delegation's satisfaction at seeing you, Sir, presiding over the Council for the month of May. While paying tribute to the skills of your predecessor, the representative of the Russian Federation, I should like to say how grateful we are that you agreed to convene this public meeting to consider the report of the Security Council mission to the Great Lakes region. Coming at a critical moment in the timetable for the implementation of the Ceasefire Agreement in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and, therefore, in the peace process in my country, I have no doubt that today's meeting will allow us to assess, together, the situation in my country and to analyse the prospects for peace, which, thanks to the support of the Council, no longer seem like an unattainable ideal for the entire population of my country.

We have just been listening to the Permanent Representative of France, Ambassador Jean-David Levitte, who with his usual eloquence and clarity introduced the report of the mission that was recently conducted in the Great Lakes region — a region that has been tormented for more than a decade, yet where all the peoples affected aspire only to peace and a return to the traditional ties of friendship and fraternity that characterized the peaceful nature of their relations in the past. I should thus like to thank Ambassador Levitte for his statement, which was useful, solidly founded and well advised.

This major United Nations body, which is responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, has dispatched three missions to our subregion in the space of two years — a rare occurrence in the history of the Security Council. My Government is convinced that this demonstrates how concerned the Council is to ensure for the peoples of the Great Lakes region in general and, in particular, of the Congo — where the people have been beaten down by the devastating effects of a four-year war of aggression — the right to peace, as well as to development, enabling them to enjoy in peace their natural resources, without which there will be no economic renewal.

My Government is therefore grateful to the international community, which was represented in all its diversity in the Security Council mission, for having taken the time to visit the subregion once again in order to gauge the progress made since the signing of the Ceasefire Agreement in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and to give an impetus, which we hope will be decisive, to the search for a long-lasting solution and an end to the crisis that is gripping the entire Great Lakes region, whose prolongation represents a war of aggression of which my country is the sacrificial victim.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo welcomes the report of the Security Council mission. We appreciate in particular the fact that, in following up on earlier reports of various Council missions to our subregion, this report has the added benefit of informing the international community of the efforts and immense sacrifices made by my Government to restore peace and normality in my country and to promote actions to return justice and dignity to the Congolese people.

The Security Council mission coincided with the end of the activities of the inter-Congolese dialogue. Those activities were sanctioned by the adoption of

some 40 resolutions relating to the organization of the transition, as well as the signing of the political agreement for the consensual management of the transition in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, better known as the Framework Agreement.

I should like at this point to express the sincere gratitude of my country to Sir President Ketumile Masire for having conducted the facilitation dialogue that made possible that inter-Congolese agreement. The achievements, and the progress made in Sun City, will doubtless form the foundation of the renewal and rebirth of the Congolese nation.

My Government would also like to thank President Thabo Mbeki of the Republic of South Africa, who hosted the dialogue, not only for all his efforts, which have been constant and which he continues to make for peace in my country, but especially for his personal involvement in the search for an acceptable solution for the majority of the participants.

The lights have dimmed on Sun City and on the inter-Congolese dialogue. At present, we must continue to move forward towards the complete success of the remaining stages of the implementation calendar of the Lusaka Agreement for the greatest possible benefit of the Congolese people. I am thinking in particular of the process of creating new institutions; of deploying the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) in phase III; of disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation or resettlement; of the orderly withdrawal of all foreign troops; of re-establishing the administrative authority of the State throughout the entire national territory; of the disarmament of non-military personnel; and of measures to normalize the security situation along the internationally recognized borders.

I must affirm that the framework agreement, agreed to by 80 per cent of the participants in the dialogue, is open to components and parties that have not yet joined it. Discussions must continue on this point. I can assure the Security Council that the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo will spare no effort to convince our brothers and sisters who have not yet done so to associate themselves with the majority. In order to do this, Major General Joseph Kabila has given the Council every assurance that he will seek to persuade the remaining entity and parties to join the national camp. The President of the Republic has noted the Government's willingness to pursue discussions across the board with those who have not yet signed the framework agreement. Contacts of that type have occurred, similar to those that took place on 2 May in Luanda, Angola, alongside the joint meeting of the Political Committee and the Security Council.

Moreover, the President of the Republic has also noted his firm desire to associate that entity and those parties, even as observers, with the entire process that has been largely begun to establish and create new republican institutions. Finally, the Democratic Republic of the Congo is confident that the Security Council, for its part, will remain active in helping to make the agreement fully inclusive, in a spirit of openness and understanding.

It is true that history will judge us on our ability to achieve national reconciliation. In the higher interest of the Congolese nation, we must make national reconciliation succeed, but we must also be aware that it will work against the demands of justice, for which history will judge us even more harshly.

One principle dear to President Joseph Kabila is that of keeping one's word. Under his leadership, significant progress has been possible in the peace process; the inter-Congolese dialogue took place; the military front has remained calm and the ceasefire has been fully respected; and the disengagement and redeployment of all forces has been observed, except by Rwanda, which, contrarily, is strengthening its positions and is now fighting the Banyamulenge, whom it claimed to protect.

It is important that the Council be able to follow up on the request made by the Political Committee on 2 May that all parties be required to comply with the relevant provisions of resolution 1399 (2002), adopted unanimously, and with the measures and practical decisions adopted by the Political Committee at its meeting in Lusaka on 20 and 21 March. The Congolese people and its President hope that 2002 will be the year when peace is restored. In that respect, the Government has welcomed the idea set forth by the Council mission to create buffer zones that would promote the orderly withdrawal of all foreign troops and allow us to find a solution to the military aspect of the war of aggression.

Any new mandate for MONUC should be steeped in that reality. In other words, the mandate to be

extended in the coming weeks should include a timetable for the withdrawal of foreign troops, a detailed description of a joint monitoring mechanism and a necessary proposal to strengthen MONUC staffing significantly so that it may fulfil its mandate effectively. Similarly, in order to succeed in establishing peace, my Government has implemented to the letter the Kampala Plan and its Harare sub-plans concerning disengagement and redeployment. We have gone even further by cantoning Rwandan ex-combatants at Kamina. Some 20 of these have volunteered to go to Rwanda and we continue to await the authorization of the Kigali authorities to enable their return to their own country.

President Kabila has stated and I reiterate that my Government does not and will never support armed groups that could destabilize their country of origin. MONUC can verify that. My Government is deeply determined to continue acting to consolidate the peace process in the Great Lakes region. It is in that context that the recovery and destruction of the weapons of the Rwandese ex-combatants should be seen, for which a symbolic ceremony was held in Kinshasa in the presence of the members of the Security Council. It is also in that context that my Government invited the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda to establish a presence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in order to facilitate its enquiries and to eliminate any new pretext for a permanent occupation of a portion of our national territory.

From our point of view, and with respect particularly to armed Rwandese, whoever they may be, we must be certain that they all leave Congolese territory and return to their own country. The Democratic Republic of the Congo wishes to live in peace and good relations with its nine neighbours and will not accept that three among them want it otherwise. The warming of relations with our sister Republic of Burundi proves that this is possible.

I will not dwell on the thorny issue of the demilitarization of Kisangani. So much has been said and written about it. If the Security Council is to restore its credibility on this issue, it must act and act quickly. The entire Democratic Republic of the Congo is watching the Council and expecting it to take bold decisions. However, Kisangani is the mirror, or rather the reflection, of the despair and terrible suffering of an entire dying people. The social and humanitarian crisis in my country has grown to disturbing proportions that particularly affect the vulnerable sectors of the population: women and children. It is to the credit of the members of Council mission that they have noted this human disaster and recognized the broader problem of the urgent need for economic and reconstruction assistance for the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The Security Council's visit was a barometer and the members of the mission were able to see for themselves the desire of the Congolese people to a better life. Thanks to the mission, river traffic has resumed on both banks of the Congo River all the way to Kisangani, where the mission met a humanitarian convoy. Since then, air traffic has resumed, albeit slowly, over 70 per cent of the national territory.

While the immediate challenges before us may be the reunification of the country, the consolidation of peace and stability and the organization of free and democratic elections in order to put an end to the crisis of legitimacy, they will be difficult to achieve without a significant renewal of economic activity and a resumption of bilateral and multilateral cooperation. Today all of the country's infrastructure has to be rebuilt, mainly its roads and railways.

The international community must attach the same importance to the economic development of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the countries of the Great Lakes region. This question is crucial if we truly wish to break forever the link between poverty and the breaches of the peace and security in our subregion.

My Government shares the Council's opinion that an international conference on peace, security, democracy and development in the Great Lakes region organized under the auspices of the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity would help the countries of our subregion to re-establish balance, which would serve the interests of our peoples.

Before I finish my remarks, allow me to paraphrase the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Mr. Léonard She Okitundu, who, in reminding the members of the Security Council's mission that the well-being or suffering of the Congolese people would depend significantly on the decisions that the Security Council would soon take, emphasized that the Council's mission raised new hopes in the hearts of the Congolese people —

particularly among those in the occupied territories. Those hopes include, in particular, the hope of seeing the aggressor foreign troops leave the Democratic Republic of the Congo once and for all; the hope of seeing the city of Kisangani demilitarized at last and getting the third phase of the deployment of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) done; the hope of seeing the Congolese people peacefully enjoying their right to decide their own affairs independently and in full sovereignty; the hope of an entire people that their country will once again find its place among the community of nations to meet the challenges of national reconstruction and globalization; and the hope finally to live in a good-neighbourly fashion with the countries around them in conformity with their calling to be the cradle of African integration.

It is my hope that all the recommendations contained in the report of the Security Council mission will be followed-up and implemented. For our part, I can assure the Council that the Democratic Republic of the Congo is prepared to play its role, as we are firmly convinced that, above all, we must respect the deep aspirations of the Congolese people as a whole for peace, stability and national reconciliation.

I cannot conclude without expressing my Government's thanks to Secretary-General Kofi Annan and to his Special Representative in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mr. Amos Namanga Ngongi — whom I am happy to see here today — for their active support for the peace process in my country. I cannot fail to mention all the staff of MONUC and all the associated humanitarian persons for their tireless efforts to find lasting peace and security for my country. To all of them I wish to express my Government's gratitude for their full dedication to the cause of peace and the restoration of dignity to the Congolese people.

The President: I thank the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of South Africa. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): On 24 February 2000, the Security Council adopted resolution 1291 (2000), which endorsed the Lusaka Agreement signed by the Congolese parties as a framework for bringing about peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The resolution expressed its strong support for the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement which, according to resolution 1291 (2000),

> "represents the most viable basis for the peaceful resolution of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo". (*resolution 1291 (2000), fifth preambular paragraph*)

Resolution 1291 (2000) went on to call on all parties to

> "fulfill their obligations under the Ceasefire Agreement". (*ibid, para. 1*)

The Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement states that

> "In order to arrive at a new political dispensation and national reconciliation arising from the inter-Congolese political negotiations, the Parties agree upon the implementation of the following principles:
>
> (a) the inter-Congolese political negotiations process shall include beside the Congolese parties, namely the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Congolese Rally for Democracy and the Movement for the Liberation of Congo, the political opposition as well as representatives of the *forces vives*;
>
> (b) all the participants in the inter-Congolese political negotiations shall enjoy equal status;
>
> (c) all the resolutions adopted by the inter-Congolese political negotiations shall be binding on all the participants". (*S/1999/815, enclosure I, annex A, para. 5.2*)

However, the report of the Security Council mission that visited the Great Lakes region from 27 April to 7 May 2002 stated that

> "The mission trusts that, in accordance with the views expressed by its interlocutors, the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, MLC and RCD-Goma will pursue their talks with a view to reaching a comprehensive and inclusive agreement in accordance with the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement. Such an agreement might then be endorsed by the parties to the inter-Congolese dialogue, in the presence of the neutral facilitator, Sir Ketumile Masire. In this context,

> the mission recommends that the Security Council, within the next few days, should consider taking further initiatives on this matter in coordination with the signatories of the Lusaka Agreement and the leaders of the region." (*S/2002/537, para. 23*)

The Security Council will therefore understand the concern of my Government that the Security Council seems to be departing from resolution 1291 (2000) and the intent of the Lusaka Agreement, which it has already endorsed. Our concern is that paragraph 23 of the report before the Council may be read to mean that the three armed parties in the Congolese dialogue can reach agreement by themselves and then impose it on the unarmed groups in the Congo. There are five components to the inter-Congolese dialogue: the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Movement for the Liberation of the Congo (MLC), the Congolese Rally for Democracy-Goma (RCD-Goma), the unarmed groups and civil society. According to the Lusaka Agreement, the five components must be treated equally. That is how they were treated during the inter-Congolese dialogue.

As the Security Council is aware, South Africa has had the honour to host the inter-Congolese dialogue, in which the people of the Congo negotiated an end to decades of conflict in their country. Over 500 Congolese from all walks of life came to Sun City to begin the process of rebuilding their country. The delegates at the inter-Congolese dialogue repeatedly made the point that, since the 1960 overthrow of President Patrice Lumumba and the only democratically elected Government that the Congo had ever known, the Congo itself had never had legitimate State institutions. Accordingly, they saw the dialogue as a critically important step in a process that would lead to the emergence of legitimate State institution, born of the democratic elections that would be held at the end of a short transitional period. They were determined, once and for all, to confront and deal with what they called the "crisis of legitimacy" in their country. When they adjourned after 52 days, they had adopted 40 resolutions that defined the kind of truly independent, united, peaceful, democratic and prosperous Congo that they and their people want to see. The content of those resolutions included political and legal concerns, peace and national reconciliation, the economy and finance, humanitarian, social and cultural concerns, and defence and security.

By any standard, it was a wonderful, historic and extraordinary achievement, especially because it expressed the sovereign will of a very representative convention of the leaders of the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It left the dialogue with one outstanding task specified in the 1999 Lusaka Agreement – agreement on the political institutions of the transition to democratic Government, the next urgent and decisive task that confronts the Congolese political and social leadership that met at Sun City.

The illegal removal of the Lumumba Government in 1960 destroyed the brand-new legitimate political institutions of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The dialogue has an historic obligation to begin the process leading to the birth of new and stable political institutions that derive their legitimacy from the will of the people, as did the institutions that led to the Government of Patrice Lumumba.

My Government believes that, for the inter-Congolese dialogue to succeed in its tasks, it will have to draw the necessary lessons from the disastrous period since the overthrow and assassination of President Patrice Lumumba, as well as from all genuine friends of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The Congolese people must determine their destiny without the foreign interference of patrons. The Congolese people must defeat those within the Congolese political class who put personal power and benefit above the people's interests. The Congolese people must fight against ethnic and regional divisions for the unity of their country. The Congolese people must insist on an inclusive process as a necessary condition to unite the country and the people, to destroy mistrust and to build mutual confidence among all stakeholders, without which a new and stable Congo will not be born. The Congolese people must oppose the use of force as a means to acquire and legitimize political power. And the Congolese people must insist that all agreements be honoured, including the Lusaka Agreement, as a critical first step towards the entrenchment of the rule of law.

My delegation would like to appeal to the Security Council to assist the people of the Congo on their journey to freedom by reaffirming its support for the Lusaka Agreement. The Council must support and respect the position of former President Ketumile Masire as the neutral facilitator chosen by the

Congolese people and endorsed by the Organization of African Unity. My Government strongly believes that the Council can do that by encouraging and supporting all components of the inter-Congolese dialogue – the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Mouvement de libération du Congo (MLC), the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie (RCD-Goma), the unarmed groups and civil society – as they seek to rebuild their own country. We would hope that the Council would not be seen as taking sides in the Congo, especially between the armed and the unarmed groups. We hope that the Council will continue to treat all sides equally in their quest for a lasting peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The President: The next speaker on my list is the representative of Rwanda. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Gasana (Rwanda) (*spoke in French*): My country congratulates you, Sir, on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for the month of May. We should also like to congratulate your predecessor, who served in April, the month when the Council decided to make a trip to visit the Great Lakes Region.

My country appreciated that initiative of the Council, in particular because its objective was to search for all the ways and means by which peace could return to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and to the entire African Great Lakes region. My country welcomes the fact that the Council has focused all its attention on the underlying causes that prompted Rwanda to intervene militarily in the Democratic Republic of the Congo by virtue of its natural right of legitimate defence under Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations.

Rwanda's concerns with regard to the security of our country and our population were expressed in our letter dated 15 April 2002 (S/2002/420) addressed to the Security Council and by the Rwandan delegation to the political committee that met in Angola during the Council's visit and during the audience that the President of the Republic of Rwanda granted Council members. Those concerns have received the Council's attention, according to the representative of France, head of the Security Council mission, and we welcome that.

I recall clearly the crucial moment when we decided to fight the former Rwandan Armed Forces (ex-FAR) and the Interahamwe militias systematically and to pursue them into their Congolese sanctuaries. That was the day — I was in the Government at the time — when, entering from Congolese territory, the ex-FAR and the militias massacred many innocent people in Rwanda, including a woman who was the mayor of one of the districts of Cyangugu province, which borders on the Democratic Republic of the Congo in southwestern Rwanda. I also recall the day — during the time I served in the Government — when we decided to advance the 600 kilometres referred to earlier by the representative of France. There as well, the action was based on the security of Rwanda and its people.

Everyone will recall the statements of President Kabila at Kinshasa and of President Mugabe at Lubumbashi, in which the two heads of State declared that they were going to bomb Rwanda. We all remember those two statements, and the Government of Rwanda took them very seriously. We thought that such threats could be carried out only by using a certain number of airports in Kisangani, Kindu and Kalemi, among others. As the result of those threats to bomb our country using a limited number of airports in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as declared by the two heads of State, we were obliged to try to prevent such bombing.

The Lusaka Peace Agreement, if it were implemented in all its components, would reassure Rwanda as soon as the planners and perpetrators of Rwandan genocide now in the Democratic Republic of the Congo no longer have the political, military, material and financial support that they now have and are disarmed, disengaged and reintegrated into the socioeconomic life of the country, in the case of those who have not been held accountable before the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda in Arusha or before other tribunals.

The inter-Congolese dialogue is a major component, even a decisive component, in the implementation of the Lusaka Peace Agreement. Rwanda and the sister Republic of Uganda have just publicized through our two Foreign Ministers the common position of our two countries and the specific proposals that could lead Sun City to a political agreement and fully inclusive power-sharing.

The agreement between President Kabila and Mr. Bemba is an agreement only between these two

individuals, who negotiated it in a hotel room, away from the facilitator and the formal framework of the inter-Congolese dialogue. We believe that the two partners of the inter-Congolese dialogue must rejoin the other Congolese partners under the auspices of Facilitator Masire and negotiate inclusive power-sharing acceptable to all.

As the Permanent Representative of South Africa rightly said, all the Congolese partners of the inter-Congolese dialogue must be considered equal. That is what the Democratic Republic of the Congo needs for the future of that beautiful land and the Congolese people, who have been suffering for decades.

The President: I thank the representative of Rwanda for his kind words addressed to me.

I call on the representative of Burundi. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Nteturuye (Burundi) (*spoke in French*): My delegation is delighted to see you, Sir, presiding over the work of the Security Council. We congratulate you.

My delegation listened with genuine satisfaction to the presentation of the report of the Security Council mission by Ambassador Jean-David Levitte. His presentation was clear and complete. The report itself really goes to the heart of the problems of the Great Lakes region. It is an honest summary of the talks between the members of the Security Council and the various Burundian authorities. It makes recommendations that are encouraging to the population of Burundi, which has suffered for so long from destructive warfare.

Six months have elapsed since the establishment of the transitional institutions in Burundi. The record of these institutions may be slim in terms of accomplishments, but it is generally positive in terms of the will to work together and the determination to move forward despite the absence of a ceasefire and international economic assistance.

The Security Council mission, which spent 24 hours in Bujumbura, on 5 and 6 May 2002, undoubtedly understood — and we see this in the report — that the peace process remains fragile because of the continuing violence and the implacable poverty afflicting the population. The most regrettable danger to the peace process may indeed be the country's disastrous economic situation.

I wish to recall the following. While the Burundians are primarily responsible for the situation in their own country, the role of the international community is not negligible. The Peace Agreement was signed with the support and pressure of the international community. We were told at the time that assistance would promptly unblocked. Then, in the face of the refusal of armed groups to join the Arusha process, further pressure was exerted on the Government so that the transitional institutions might be established without awaiting the ceasefire. Today the institutions are there. But they are increasingly being discredited, as is the Peace Agreement itself, which brings neither the peace nor the resources promised.

The Security Council may not have had the time to gage the depth of frustration and disappointment of the population and its leaders, or the extreme poverty of 6 million Burundians, which is increasingly swamping them in despair. Yet the subregion has the means to prevent armed groups from taking the peace process hostage; it is a region which for two and one-half years imposed an economic embargo on Burundi to force the authorities to enter into negotiations with the armed groups. We wonder why today it is displaying such patience in the face of the intransigent attitude of armed groups, while the risk of seeing the peace process crumble is becoming increasingly real.

The Burundian Government is going to continue, and to even intensify, its bilateral contacts that have positively developed recently with the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Tanzania so that the necessary pressure may be placed on the armed groups, with a view to negotiating and signing the ceasefire as soon as possible.

Even if some international financial institutions set new conditions that are unacceptable to a country that actually needs assistance to meet these conditions and that has to struggle against a formidable rebellion that kills innocent people, the Government of Burundi is determined to move forward to implement wherever possible the provisions of the Peace Agreement. It is determined to initiate the administrative, political, social and economic reforms that financial means and security constraints may allow.

The Government will intensify its contacts with the countries of the sub-region and the facilitation so that further talks with the armed groups can be

organized with the objective of arriving, if not at the signing of a ceasefire, at the very least at the cessation of hostilities before 1 July 2002, the fortieth anniversary of Burundi's independence. As of that date, those who have not rejoined the peace process should be disqualified politically and be rendered unable to do harm by all peace-loving Burundians and by the countries of the subregion, which plan to hold a summit on Burundi in the second half of June. After all, applying the Peace Agreement also means taking severe measures against the armed groups that refuse to join the Agreement and want the Arusha process to fail.

Article 2 of the Agreement provides what the international community and Burundi must do to thwart the enemies of the peace Agreement. In the meantime, the Burundian population and its leaders are placing their hopes in the initiatives promised by the Security Council with the International Monetary Fund and other donors, so that the country can be saved before it is too late. This will be possible only if all partners, within and without, fulfil their commitments now, not tomorrow.

Peace in Burundi also depends on the situation in the Great Lakes region, particularly in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It is Burundi's hope that the inter-Congolese dialogue will continue and will open the doors to being as inclusive as possible. Burundi is particularly interested in the demobilization and disarmament of armed groups, including the Burundian rebels. For that purpose, the proposal to establish a buffer zone is an interesting solution, and Burundi is prepared to support it. However, the Government of Burundi also wants all parties to work in a positive spirit to restore real peace and security to the two Kivus, which border countries with serious security concerns along their border with the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

In conclusion, allow me to say how greatly the Burundian authorities appreciated the exchanges and the words of encouragement provided by the mission of the Security Council and how deeply the long-suffering Burundian population is touched by the expression of care and solidarity reflected in the Security Council's two visits in a twelve-month period.

The President: I thank the representative of Burundi for his kind words addressed to me.

I shall now give the floor to Ambassador Levitte to respond to some of the comments that have been made.

Mr. Levitte (France) (*spoke in French*): We have heard the major interlocutors with great interest. I would like to thank them for their remarks, with one necessary clarification on one point, with regard to paragraph 23 of the Council's report — and I am looking to my friend, Ambassador Kumalo — so that there is no misunderstanding as to what the Security Council has in mind with respect to the inter-Congolese dialogue. I think that it is a very important point. The Security Council is strictly following the text of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement. The Council spent a great deal of time to find the wording to express what we had in mind.

We all hope that the inter-Congolese dialogue will end in a closing ceremony bringing together all the participants, so that, in the presence of Sir Ketumile Masire, there will be a consensus bringing together, without exception, all those who did such tremendous work at Sun City.

However, we are in a fairly delicate phase, in which we see the risk of the crystallization of two opposing blocks of unequal size, but which could lead to the risk of a partition. The risk of the crystallization of antagonistic positions prompts us to say that, in the current phase, it is desirable to promote direct and discreet contacts. That is what we did in the presence of all of the Ministers of the Lusaka Political Committee in Luanda on 2 May, where the three parties signatories of the Lusaka Agreement, the armed parties, met before our official meeting. That format was not without precedents. In fact, before the opening of the Sun City meeting, there were, with the agreement of Sir Ketumile Masire, two meetings among the same three parties. The meetings were useful for reconciling the points of view. One of the meetings was held in Geneva with the discreet participation of a representative of Sir Ketumile and of our friend, Ibrahima Fall. The second meeting was held in Abuja, using the same format. Those two meetings get things moving and in favourable conditions for the Sun City meeting.

So, what we have in mind — I think it is worthwhile to clarify it for everyone — is to promote in the current phase a discreet dialogue, without any preconditions — that is important — and in a spirit of

openness, in order to reconcile the points of view and to arrive at an inclusive agreement that leaves no one out. Such an agreement obviously includes civil society and the political parties. The problem today is that civil society and the political parties have taken sides, when what we need is to bring the whole together through the process, which could be effective in the current phase — we think — but should be discreet. That is the clarification I wanted to bring to the attention of our friends, in particular to the Ambassador of South Africa.

Sir Jeremy Greenstock (United Kingdom): First of all, I want to fully support what Ambassador Levitte has set out by way of conclusions to the mission and his response to the interventions that we heard earlier.

I would like to make one additional point which I think is very important. As I understand the view of all members of the Security Council mission, we came back convinced that there was a real chance to move forward in resolving the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in the Great Lakes region if the inter-Congolese dialogue could be brought to a conclusion that fitted the Lusaka Agreement and the aims of resolution 1291 (2000) and following resolutions. In our conversations with the Presidents of the countries that we visited, it was quite clear to us that they were prepared to work on the basis of a successful dialogue to complete the rest of the programme that was required under Lusaka. This puts an extra focus on the need to conclude the dialogue successfully so that it will be something which Mr. Ketumile Masire can declare a proper result that satisfies the conditions of the dialogue. That will then produce a series of reactions and further activities under the requirements of coordination between the parties of Lusaka, which can produce peace in the country, demilitarization of the armed groups, the withdrawal of all foreign troops and the restoration of stability and of economic normality in the region. It is a watershed that the Council cannot allow to be left on the wrong side of. Therefore, it is very important that, in the days and weeks to follow, we all put our collective and several influences behind a successful conclusion of the dialogue. It is more than just one opportunity among many; it is the opportunity to make progress at a time when the fighting has died down and the people of the Congo sense that there is an opportunity for them to have a future quite different from the one that they have had to face over the last three years. So, we must all find practical ways of producing a real conclusion to the dialogue and not just support with rhetoric the words that have been written in resolutions. We have to act to support a real conclusion to the dialogue to release that potential.

The President: The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting was adjourned at 12.25 p.m.